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ABSTRACT

This book relates the experiences of Abbie Morgan, who with her husband Ed, moved to the Alaskan village of Kulukak in 1931. Abbie accepted an assignment from the United States government to be the village teacher while her husband was appointed to provide health care for the village population and monitor the area's reindeer herd. The village of Kulukak was very remote and could only be reached by boat or by dogsled when ice made travel by boat impossible. Abbie found that life in the little village on Bristol Bay, where people lived in sod houses and subsisted on food from the sea and reindeer meat, was a challenge both physically and emotionally. The book illustrates how she met the challenge with courage, humor, and love for the people she had come to teach and who in turned helped her survive the harsh environment and the unexpected death of her husband. She tells of the difficulty of travel and communication in the Far North, the magnificent physical environment, the children to whom she devoted her time, school activities, and village life. The book details aspects of the Eskimo way of life, including the enormous amount of work needed to maintain a dog team, the spiritual beliefs of Eskimos, the vegetable-gathering and fishing traditions of villagers, and the finely tuned navigational skills of those who traveled by boat. Soon after the death of her husband, Abbie returned to Hoquiam, Washington, where her family lived, and in 1937 she married Orville Madenwald and had two children. Includes photographs, maps, and a discussion of Yup'ik vocabulary.
(Author/LP)

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